COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Proposal to bring Judges within the purview of the Prevention of Corruption Act

454. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to bring the Judges of High Courts and Supreme Court within the purview of Prevention of corruption Act by deleting Art. 217(b) of the Constitution; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and if not, what are reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b); No, Sir. The Government is of the view that in order to maintain the independence of judiciary, the existing provisions in the Constitution for the removal of a Judge of the High Court or the Supreme Court are adequate.

Enactment of law making exercise of franchise compulsory

455. SHRI S. K. T. RAMACHANDRAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state whether Government propose to enact a law to make exercise of franchise compulsory on the part of registered voters in the elections to Parliament and State Legislatures?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ): There is no such proposal under consideration of the Government.

Proposal to Formulate Policy to Expedite Litigations

456. CHAUDHARY HARMOHAN SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to formulate any policy with a view to expedite cases relating to land-disputes;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the action Government have taken in this regard; and

(c) if answer to part (b) above be in the negative, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT) (SHRI RAMESHWAR THAKUR) (a) and (b) With a view to expediting the disposal of land disputes relating to land ceiling and such other revenue and land reforms matters, the Government of India, as a part of land reforms policy, has been from time to time advising at various for a e.g. Conferences of Revenue Ministers and Chief Ministers, to the State Governments to set up Land Tribunals under the provisions of Article 323-B of the Constitution or create Special Courts/Bench in High Court in consultation with the concerned High Court. Accordingly, the States of Bihar, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal have enacted legislation for setting up Land Tribunals under Article 323-B of the Constitution.

(c) Question does not arise.

Judges in the Gujarat High Court employees

457. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of vacancies of judges in the Gujarat High Court at present;

(b) what is the number of judges in the High Court of Gujarat at present; and

(c) by when the vacancies are likely to be filled up and dates from which these vacancies have been caused?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ) (a) to (c) There are at present 27 permanent/Additional Judges, in position, in the Gujarat High Court, and there are 3 vacancies, which arose on 21.11.1992. Recommendations of the State authorities of Gujarat, in consultation with the Chief Justice of the High Court, in terms of the relevant provisions of the Constitution, for filling up these vacancies have not yet been received. It is not possible to indicate by when the vacancies would be filled up.

Formation of Judicial Service Commission

458. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to set up Judicial Service Commission; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and if not, what are reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) At present, there is no proposal under consideration of the Government for the setting up of the National Judicial Commission. No change in the present system of appointment of Judges is considered necessary for the present.

Fund Collected by Companies for Plantation

459. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are aware that various companies are collecting huge funds of grow plants for Teak wood, Palm oil, Grapes, Roses etc.;

(b) if so, the number of issues which have come out involving such companies and the total amount collected out of these schemes;

(c) whether Government have received any complaints in this regard; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken to rectify the malpractices involved therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Several companies have recently been registered for carrying on the business of Plantations and other agro-forestry operations. These companies have advertised certain schemes offering ownership of fully grown trees at the end of investment period of 15 to 20 years. The schemes advertised by these companies are not for public issues of shares and do not confer any membership rights in the company. Advertisements for such schemes are not covered by the provisions of the Companies Act relating to prospectus or advertisement inviting public deposits. Under the existing provisions of the Companies Act, such Companies are also not required to file information relating to collection of funds and transactions under such schemes with the Registrar of Companies.

(c) and (d) On the basis of information available in the text of the advertisements issued by such companies and references made by the Government, the Director General of Investigation and Registration is investigating the alleged unfair trade practices indulged in by such companies by making alleged false claims or misrepresentations under section 36 A of the MRTP Act, 1969. In the matter of M/s Sanghi Plantations Limited the MRTP Commission has instituted an enquiry into the alleged unfair trade practices indulged in by the company and the matter is *sub-judice*.